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necessary appliances for drill and practice. Part II. supplies a desideratum long felt, especially for college classes, in affording a systematic and, within certain limits, scholarly compend of the leading facts of French grammar. While scarcely categorical enough for easy use by younger pupils, Professor Whitney's presentation of the doctrine of the subjunctive, for example, and of the infinitive, may be pointed to as comparing favorably, both in spirit and manner, with corresponding passages in his incomparable Sanskrit grammar. The idea of the Illustrative Sentences from French authors, in this part, is in itself a good one, though sometimes carried out with questionable judgment. The sentences given are too often provokingly in need of a context, while the introduction of such an antiquated specimen as '*J'ai ouï dire à feu ma sœur que sa fille et moi naquîmes la même année,*' to illustrate a simple point in grammar (the use of *feu*), is not edifying in an elementary work. It shows that the range of three centuries allowed in the choice of examples, may be made to seem too wide.

There is an excellent system of references for words irregular or peculiar in pronunciation; the vocabularies and indexes are refreshingly complete (*concert* is wanting, to cover sentence 18, p. 134), and misprints are admirably few (but cf. l'abbé de Sainte Gènevieve, p. 237, 4, and read §137*a* instead of §131*a*, p. 429, 2d col., under 'so,' l. 4). Professor Whitney's philological sense has stood him in good stead in the matter of rejecting exploded etymologies and in using the question-mark for doubtful cases (yet *hoc illud* is given for *oui*; and *per-ustum*, for *brûler*, should have a ?). The book is attractively printed, on good paper and with clear type. It is to be hoped that teachers of French, whether in or out of college, will for the present consider this the very best of grammars in English for use in their elementary classes.

One more serious word remains: let it be spoken frankly, yet with all the consideration due from the beginner to the veteran. There is a regret which the fraternity of French scholars may justly feel entitled to indulge with regard to Professor Whitney. It is, that after many years' teaching of French in one of

our foremost universities, and even when about to write a grammar of the French language, he, with all his royal training and capabilities, should not have felt a sufficiently intelligent interest in the subject of French philology, to find himself impelled to look about him, and to inform himself of the status and results of this subtle, broad and vigorous science.

H. A. TODD.

*York Plays.* The Plays Performed by the Crafts or Mysteries of York, on the day of Corpus Christi, in the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Centuries. Now first Printed from the Unique Manuscript in the Library of Lord Ashburnham. Edited, with Introduction and Glossary, by LUCY TOULMIN SMITH, Oxford, Clarendon Press. 1885. 8vo, pp. lxxviii+557.

*Abraham and Isaac.* A Norfolk Mystery, edited from the Brome Hall Manuscript by LUCY TOULMIN SMITH. Anglia, Band vii., Heft 3, 1884, pp. 316-337.

To say that the works above noted are the first really serviceable editions of English Mysteries yet produced may seem to imply a harsh judgment of precedent work; and yet the statement is true. We have had the records of erratic and unrelated research in the works of Sharp, Marriott, and Warton; we have had also the diverting narratives of explorations of Hone and Disraeli; and we have had the very good second-hand summaries of Morley, Collier and Ward. But, for the scholar's use, all of the works above noted, excellent as they are for certain purposes, are most inadequate, and exasperation succeeds to hope when one attempts to use them as assistants to any real investigation. One needs such careful studies as those of Sepet, Klein, de Julleville and Ebert, and they are not at hand. Even the editions of the Miracle Play Cycles that we have—the Townley plays, edited with laborious ineptitude by Mr. Stevenson, the Coventry plays by Mr. Halliwell, and the Chester series, edited (with much plum-plucking of collateral matter from

1 The Cornish plays have been well edited by Mr. Whitley Stokes.

abroad) by Mr. Thos. Wright—must be used with the greatest caution, for the reason that there is in them no constant equation of error. One can never be sure whether the occurrence of an unusual form is due to careless proof-reading; to an "error of the Scribe," the usual recourse of the puzzled editor; to an error by the editor's copyist; or to normalizing by the editor. To give utterance to these truths is most ungracious, for all this editing has been a labour of love, and the unpaid worker deserves our thanks, yet inasmuch as it is nearly half a century since most of this work was done, plainness of speech may be permitted.

All that we have said concerning the lack of scientific method of study of the English plays was, till within a very recent period, true also of the greater field of Early Continental Liturgical and Didactic Dramas. But in the last decade great advance has been made in the investigation of the Earlier Mysteries and especially of the vast French remains.

Between 1876 and 1881 appeared the great editions of the Nostre Dame Mysteries, edited by Gaston Paris, the fifteenth century Passion (Greban's), by the same editor assisted by M. Raynaud, and the Mystere du viel Testament by M. Rothschild. During this time have also appeared numerous monographs on various topics, and also the remarkable work of de Julleville.

It was the work of Rothschild, says Miss Smith, that first directed her attention to the York Plays, and the volume before us is the result. The object of this note is not formally to review<sup>2</sup> the book, but to call attention to the literary and linguistic value of the plays themselves and to the aid that this volume gives to the scholar.

At first glance, the field of study in English Mysteries seems somewhat limited. Even if we include the Cornish plays, there are in existence in England hardly more than twenty-two MSS., including portions of ten distinct

Cycles, and one hundred and sixty-three plays, as follows:

Locality.	Description.	Plays.	Complete MSS.	Fragments and late Copies.
Dublin....	Fragments of Cycle.....	1.....	1.....	0
Chester....	Full Cycle.....	25.....	5.....	1
Cornwall..	Cycle.....	3.....	1.....	0
"	...Single Play.....	3.....	3.....	6
Coventry..	Full Cycle.....	42.....	1.....	0
Croxton...	Single Play..	1.....	1.....	0
Newcastle..	Fragments of Cycle.....	1.....	1.....	0
Norfolk....	Single Play.....	1.....	1.....	0
Norwich...	" "	1.....	1.....	1
Wakefield..	Townley Cycle.....	32.....	1.....	0
York.....	Full Cycle..	48.....	1.....	1
Unknown...	Single Plays.....	5.....	5.....	1
		163	22	10

And yet, for special reasons, these Plays are of great value for their matter and for their form. They are of value for their matter: partly because of the simple, tender, realistic unquestioning treatment of a great topic; and still more, because, being upon a common topic and from various localities, we have an index to the attitude of the masses in widely separated counties toward a great subject. They are of value for their form: partly because the verse is always rhythmic and sometimes strong; and mainly because the words and the rhymes give us completely the people's language of half a dozen cities at fairly settled dates. I know of no other middle English writings which, within the same compass of matter, will give the moderately advanced student such a range of opportunity for investigation of the temper of mind and the method of expression of the masses.

For elemental dialect studies they are equally valuable, since their general agreement is so marked that the tracing of variation is easy, and since duplicate presentations frequently give the needed corrections without recourse to notes or conjectures. A Seminary class could easily read the entire series in a term, together with Ebert, Klein and de Julleville, or Mone, Sepet and D'Ancona.

For study of such sort, this volume is admirably fitted.

In the first place, the text is not only accurate, but it is unnormalized, and only those who have compared some well-known Early English Text Society's editions with the original

<sup>2</sup> See reviews as follows:

Englische Studien,..... XI: 449, Joseph Hall.  
 Anglia,.....VIII: 161, L. Proescholdt.  
 Sat. Rev.....60: 233, Aug. 15, 1885.  
 Scot. Rev.....6: 220, Oct. 1885.  
 Nation.....41: 242, Sept. 17, 1885.  
 Journal of Philology,... VII: 518, Dec. 1886, J. M. Garnett.

manuscript can know how rare is this merit. For other matters of clerical detail, one may say that the glossary is inoffensive and that such notes as are made on points of grammar and dialectal variations are suggestive rather than dogmatic. In the second place, the Plays are throughout edited with a painstaking intelligence which is most hopeful.

In the Introduction, the history, sources, method and metres of the plays are really studied, and in the body of the work the constant care in giving cross-references, original authorities, suggestions, and explanations, makes the study of this single volume a guide to a large portion of the general subject.

For these reasons, I commend this volume to students of English and hope the forthcoming edition of the Townley Mysteries will prove to be equally worthy of attention.

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#### PORTUGUESE LITERATURE.

*Curso de Historia da Litteratura Portuguesa*, por THEOPHILO BRAGA. 8vo, 6 + 411 pp. Lisboa, Nova Livraria Internacional, 1885.\*

On the tenth of June, 1880, was enacted in Lisbon one of the most remarkable pageants ever witnessed in any country or in any age. It was the tercentenary of Camoens' death, when literary representatives from the civilized world gathered in the Portuguese capital to help his countrymen pay appropriate homage to the memory of the great poet. The remains of the bard and those of the statesman whose valorous deeds he had sung, Vasco da Gama, were transferred to the same resting-place, while kings, princes, nobles and people joined the *litterati* in making this the most unique occasion in the nation's history. Hundreds of special publications, artistic productions and historical contributions bearing upon the life and writings of the singer of the Lusiads were issued, and served to mark a notable era in the literary life of Portugal. It was the beginning of a new epoch that has since been prolific in works and monographs of special investigation into the sources and earliest docu-

ments of Lusitanian lore. A recasting of methods in the treatment of her literary history has naturally followed, and one of the best examples of it is seen in the treatise before us. The man who seems to be actuated above all others by something of the literary spirit that moved the great Camoens, is the author of this work. His unflagging energy, his wonderful capacity for work, his extraordinary production, have scarcely been surpassed in the same length of time by any *littérateur* of the Peninsula, and, particularly in modern times, has his example been exceptional among his countrymen. Fired by an unwavering patriotism, he has pushed forward against insurmountable obstacles, making known to the world outside the rich treasures of Portuguese lore and carrying back to his countrymen, so exclusive in their literary life, those germs of modern European thought whose liberalizing influences have emancipated modern culture and raised it above the formalism and narrowness of that of mediæval times.

In the spirit of reform, the author wrote, in 1875, his "Manual de Historia da Litteratura portugueza," which was a failure because it was so much in advance of the public demand; or, as a critic facetiously said of it: "Acharam-o sempre grande, e que por este motivo deixavam de o adoptar." In this work the writer formulated his canon of literary criticism in the following words: "A reforma do ensino da litteratura deve partir da conclusão a que chegou a sciencia moderna que o estudo das creações intellectuaes não se pode fazer em abstracto. É necessario nunca abandonar a comunicação directa com os monumentos, explicando-os e apreciando-os pelas suas relações historicas como o meio e circumstancias em que foram produzidas. O estudo da litteratura feito nas vagas generalidades, conduz a essas receitas de tropos, que tiram a seriedade as mais altas concepções do espirito humano. Na instrucção de um paiz deve entrar com toda a sua importância um elemento nacional; no ensino fundado nas ócas abstracções nunca esse sentimento se desperta." It is in conformity with this doctrine that the "Curso de Historia da Litteratura" represents the last stage of growth of the author's literary con-

\* Extracted from "The American Journal of Philology," Vol. VIII., pp. 92-95.